

which provides health coverage for seniors, but it will have little value if the system goes bankrupt.

According to President Clinton's Medicare board of trustees report, which I hold here, Medicare will be bankrupt in 7 years. Seniors simply cannot afford to lose their primary source of health care. We can either proceed on our current path of bankruptcy or strengthen, simplify and save Medicare.

I say we choose to save this vital program. To achieve this goal, we must slow the growth of Medicare. It is now growing at 10 to 11 percent per year annually. If we can slow the growth to between 5 and 7 percent, we can save Medicare from bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, let us not fall for the scare tactics. We must act carefully and thoughtfully to protect Medicare, but we must take action now.

HARLEY-DAVIDSON ON THE CUTTING EDGE

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, Chi Chi the potbellied pig is in deep, deep trouble. Chi Chi was arrested for rape. That is right. Chi Chi, like millions of others, could not resist the most beautiful hog in the world, a Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

When interviewed by Swine Magazine Daily, Chi Chi said:

The flowing lines of her beautiful, made-in-America full-fendered skirts and slip clutch were too much for me to handle.

Quite frankly, I lost it.

Mr. Speaker, Chi Chi lost it all right. Chi Chi is scheduled for castration, which only goes to show you; when it comes to quality, made in America, Harley-Davidson is on the cutting edge.

SUPPORT THE TRUE CONTRACT WITH AMERICA

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago, with Harry Truman watching, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into a law a program to guarantee health insurance for every person over 65.

Thirty years ago, Medicare was born. Thirty years ago, half our senior citizens did not have health insurance. Today, because of Medicare, 99 percent of our elderly have health insurance.

The Republicans are threatening the Medicare program. And they are doing it to pay for tax breaks promised in their so-called Contract With America.

But make no mistake about it, that is not the Contract With America. I have here in my pocket the true contract with America—the Medicare Act signed by President Johnson. This is

our contract with our parents, with our children, with our grandchildren. This is our contract with America.

Medicare is a sacred trust with our seniors and our families. It cannot and must not be violated.

SENIORS ARE PAWNS IN THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET GAME

(Mr. REED asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of the 104th Congress, the American people have listened to Democrats and Republicans debate national priorities. The priorities of the Republican Party are crystal clear. They support a contract with the wealthy over our historic contract with older Americans.

Under the Republican budget resolution, the wealthiest 1.1 million Americans will receive a \$20,000 tax break. In return, 37 million seniors will see their Medicare benefits cut by over \$1,000 a year by the year 2002.

Let me remind my Republican colleagues that Medicare is not a welfare program, it is not a luxurious giveaway like the Republican tax cuts, and it is not a fiscal candy jar. It is an insurance program that has enabled 37 million seniors to live lives of independence and dignity.

Let us not make seniors pawns in the Republican budget game—raiding Medicare to pay for tax cuts to the wealthy is completely unacceptable.

IT IS TIME FOR AN OUTSIDE COUNSEL

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the ranking member of the House Ethics Committee sharply criticized the committee's slow progress on investigating the numerous charges against Speaker GINGRICH.

The ranking member of the committee has charged that the committee had delayed votes, run a sloppy investigation, and was unprepared to question Speaker GINGRICH when he appeared before the committee, yesterday.

The House Ethics Committee's so-called investigation into the charges against Speaker GINGRICH is beginning to smell like a coverup. It is time to hand this case over to an outside counsel who can investigate these serious allegations in a nonpartisan and thorough fashion.

LET US BE FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, we all have to live by the rules of the House. In my opinion the previous speaker violated the rules of the House. We cannot talk about ethics investigations on the floor of this House.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard a lot of rhetoric from people talking today on that side of the aisle, the Democrat side of the aisle. I just have to point out that I have been keeping track here. Just about every one of them who spoke are listed as the biggest spenders in the House over the last 5, 10, 15, 20 years.

We have a national debt that is reaching \$5 trillion. It costs \$250 billion today just to pay the interest on it. If we allow spending to continue like President Clinton has asked us to do, then we would be paying over \$350 billion in interest on that national debt. That means less money to help those people that really need help and less money to solve the Medicare problem.

Let us get this House in order. Let us be fiscally responsible. Then we can help those people who really need help.

APPOINT AN OUTSIDE COUNSEL

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, why is the Ethics Committee creating a whole new set of rules for NEWT GINGRICH?

According to this morning's press reports, the committee has made a whole series of special exceptions for Mr. GINGRICH.

Rather than following the rules and practices that have governed this committee for decades, the committee is making up new rules as they go along.

Rather than voting for a preliminary inquiry to look into the charges, which has been done in every other high-profile case, this committee has said no.

As one committee member suggested yesterday, any further delay on voting for a preliminary inquiry exposes the panel and the full House to the charge of a coverup.

Mr. Speaker, the only way we're going to get to the bottom of these very serious charges is to appoint a professional, nonpartisan, outside counsel to investigate, just as we have in every other high-profile ethics case since 1979.

No Member of this body is above the House rules. There can be no more special exceptions.

SAVING MEDICARE FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS

(Mrs. KELLY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, Monday is the 30th anniversary of Medicare. And yesterday to underscore my commitment to preserving Medicare for the next 30 years, I took a pledge to fight for this program.